

ADVISORY BOARD ON TEACHER EDUCATION AND LICENSURE (ABTEL)

Minutes

Meeting Date and Location: November 18, 2002
Hilton Garden Inn—Innsbrook
Richmond, Virginia

ABTEL Members Present:

Sharon Condrey	Mark Ingerson	Donna Smith
Nancy Davenport	Linda Kelly	J. David Smith
Judy Davis-Dorsey	Cheryl Lightfoot	Rita Thompson
Ron Diss	Jane Massey-Wilson	Susan Walton
Mark Glaser	Suzanne Meyer	Rena' White
Margaret Shibley Gray		

ABTEL Members Absent: Kenneth Fleming
Nancy Miller
Dale Sander

Board of Education Liaison: Susan T. Noble

Ex-Officio Members Present: Toni Cleveland
Nancy Cooley

Department of Education Staff: Thomas A. Elliott
JoAnne Y. Carver
Patty S. Pitts

Guests: Alan Arroyo
Regent University

Betty Lambdin
Virginia Education Association

Donald B. Langrehr
Radford University

Linda Poorbaugh
Virginia Department of Education

Rupa Thadhani
Virginia Commonwealth University

Full Board Meeting

Jane Massey-Wilson, chair of the Advisory Board on Teacher Education and Licensure, called the meeting to order at approximately 9 a.m. and welcomed members and guests.

Introduction of Guests

Dr. Massey-Wilson introduced the following invited speakers: Dr. Donald B. Langrehr, associate professor, Department of Educational Studies, Radford University and Linda Poorbaugh, director of elementary education, Virginia Department of Education. The following guests introduced themselves to the advisory board members:

Dr. Alan Arroyo, Dean, School of Education, Regent University; Betty Lambdin, Virginia Education Association; and, Rupa Thadhani, doctoral student, Virginia Commonwealth University.

Approval of Agenda

The agenda was approved by consensus with the following two additions: 1) Under the section : "Discussion and Development of ABTEL's Recommendations to the Board of Education," add the topic "Next Steps" after "Tentative Recommendations;" and 2) Under the section labeled "Liaison Reports," add the topic, "Other" after "The Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV)."

Approval of Minutes

Minutes from the October 21, 2002, ABTEL meeting were approved by consensus.

Reading Initiative to Enhance the Preparation of Pre-Service and In-Service Reading Specialists and Teachers in Elementary and Special Education [Focus on Phonemic Awareness, Phonics, Fluency, Vocabulary, and Comprehension]

Opening Comments on the Charge to ABTEL

Dr. Jane Massey-Wilson provided introductory remarks regarding the charge issued by Mr. Mark Christie, President of the Virginia Board of Education, to ABTEL at its October 21, 2002, meeting relative to the reading initiative. Dr. Massey-Wilson emphasized that it was "imperative we have highly trained teachers in reading content and strategies. Reading is the most important skill to assist students in achievement." She provided a review of House Joint Resolution (HJR) 794 (requesting the Virginia Department of Education, in cooperation with the State council of Higher Education for Virginia, to study the proficiency of Virginia teachers in teaching systematic explicit phonics and the availability in school divisions of decodable textbooks and other suitable materials for

systematic phonics instruction). Dr. Massey-Wilson also reviewed ABTEL's suggested strategies to enhance the proficiency of elementary and special education pre-service and in-service teachers in systematic explicit phonics instruction relative to the HJR 794 study. Recommended strategies are as follows:

I. Strengthening pre-service preparation of elementary and special education teachers – Recommendation: *Prepare in-service teachers to demonstrate proficiency in systematic explicit phonics including how to teach the 44 sounds and 26 letters of the English language and how to instruct students in 1) phonemic awareness in rhyming, blending, segmentation; 2) deletion and substitution of phonemes; and 3) structural analysis in phonics. In addition, pre-service preparation should enable prospective teachers to assess children in grades K-3 in phonemic awareness and phonics, appropriate use of decodable texts, and the application of phonemic awareness and phonics instruction to read for meaning;*

II. Developing strategies for assessing proficiency in systematic explicit phonics instruction – Recommendation: *Design assessments that address fundamental knowledge and skills in systematic explicit phonics instruction and reading for meaning.*

- The development of assessments in Virginia to measure pre-service and in-service proficiency of teachers may include a variety of strategies such as a statewide test, simulated activities, videos, portfolios, college course work, or other initiatives.
- The implementation of these assessment strategies should provide the option for teachers to meet identified competencies through demonstrated knowledge and the ability to assist students in systematic explicit phonics instruction.

III. Enhancing professional development strategies for in-service educators and institutional officials that prepare beginning teachers in systematic explicit phonics instruction - Recommendation: *Provide professional development opportunities in systematic explicit phonics instruction for administrators, language arts lead teachers, reading specialists, curriculum specialists, special education teachers, teachers of English as a Second Language, and others responsible for teaching reading.*

Dr. Massey-Wilson summarized her report regarding the essentials of reading that was presented on November 6, 2002, to the Virginia Board of Education's No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Committee. Highlights of the report included an overview of the five major components of reading—phonemic awareness, phonics, comprehension, fluency, and vocabulary, and excerpts from an article previously disseminated to ABTEL members entitled, "What I've Learned about Effective Reading Instruction from a Decade of Studying Exemplary Elementary Classroom Teachers," by

Richard L. Allington, Fein Professor of Education, University of Florida, Gainesville, and published in Phi Delta Kappan magazine in June 2002. “Using data from a lengthy study of first- and fourth-grade teachers in six states, Mr. Allington concludes that enhanced reading proficiency rests largely on the capacity of classroom teachers to provide expert, exemplary reading instruction—instruction that cannot be packaged or regurgitated from a common script because it is responsive to children’s needs.”

Dr. Massey-Wilson discussed the need for teachers to be professionally educated to do the following: 1) teach on each student’s instructional level (differentiating instruction); 2) teach using a variety of resources and materials rather than solely depending on textbooks to make learning interesting; 3) disaggregate data to determine skills in which students demonstrate weaknesses; and, 4) pace students and provide appropriate instruction. She emphasized that higher education faculty must know how to teach the five major components of reading and that pre-service teachers should be assigned to cooperating teachers in the schools who also know how to teach these components.

Dr. Massey-Wilson concluded her remarks by reiterating the challenge from Mr. Mark Christie for ABTEL members to make a recommendation to the Virginia Board of Education in January 2003, relative to how Virginia (focusing on the five major components of reading) can ensure that elementary teachers are effective reading teachers. She noted that Mr. Christie “would like to see a reading specialist in each school.” Dr. Massey-Wilson also emphasized the need to ensure that reading specialists know and can teach the five major components of reading.

Background Information

Sharon L. Condrey, ABTEL member and chair, Panel for Reviewing Reading Assessments for Initial Licensure—Elementary Education, Special Education, English as a Second Language (ESL), and Middle Education Teachers in Virginia, presented a review of background information on ABTEL’s involvement with the Board of Education’s initiative to improve the teaching of reading in Virginia’s public schools. Mrs. Condrey discussed the work completed by the panel, including recommendations for consideration by ABTEL and Department of Education personnel to determine the appropriateness of recommending the use of Educational Testing Service (ETS) or National Evaluation Systems, Inc. (NES) reading assessment tests as part of the initial licensure requirements for elementary education, special education, ESL, and middle education teachers. Highlights from the report, *Review of ETS and NES Reading Assessments*, submitted by independent consultant Dr. Louisa C. Moats to ABTEL on April 11, 2001, also were presented. Background materials relative to the reading initiative were mailed to ABTEL members for review prior to the November 18, 2002, meeting.

Dr. Thomas A. Elliott, ABTEL liaison and assistant superintendent, Division of Teacher Education and Licensure, reminded ABTEL members to think of in-puts and out-puts related to preK-3, preK-6, and special education teachers only, as well as members’

concerns regarding test components (or specifications in general). “Current licensure regulations reflect more what we envision teachers should be able to do rather than what are essential skills new teachers should bring to entry level experiences. ABTEL’s charge today is to generate recommendations that should be turned into strategies for in-service and pre-service teachers.”

Sharon Condrey requested a copy of the chart outlining the reading panel’s recommendations to ABTEL regarding ETS and NES assessments be sent to ABTEL members to include with background materials already received.

Invited Presentations

Dr. Donald B. Langrehr, associate professor, Department of Educational Studies, Radford University, presented a PowerPoint presentation summarizing his report to the Board of Education’s NCLB committee. Dr. Langrehr believes that teachers need to learn systematic explicit phonics skills to understand the basics of teaching phonics. He said that “this is the first thing teachers need to know in order to teach. Also, teachers must revisit whole language to understand other issues. You need both. You cannot expect teachers to teach phonics if they do not understand the basic linguistic concepts themselves.”

Radford University requires courses on phonemic awareness and phonics, to include the following: 1) mastery of specific learning concepts such as a) explicit training in phonemic awareness and phonics concepts; b) formal testing of phonemic awareness and phonics competencies; c) demonstrated student proficiency at the 80 percent level on a 50-item test; and knowledge of the Phonological and Literacy Screening (PALS) Test that also stresses phonics. Pre-service teachers learn to analyze reading tests using information collected on students they are actually working with in the public schools. Student reading miscues are matched with spelling errors. Student “prescription plans” are then developed based on this data. The outcome derived is a collaborative experience between pre-service teachers and other professionals that “uses the professional jargon to make learning the basic skills real.” Pre-service teachers also learn to use literature to teach phonics skills. One cohort of pre-service teachers currently uses these techniques.

Linda Poorbaugh, director of elementary instruction, Virginia Department of Education, presented an overview of Department of Education plans for *In-Service Development Based on Funding of the Reading First Initiative (NCLB)*. Funding for this initiative will be provided to Virginia through a \$16.9 million, six-year entitlement grant. Eighty percent of the funds are allotted in the form of Title I grants to 60-75 schools characterized by high poverty and low reading achievement. Twenty percent of the Department’s funds will be used for professional development for all kindergarten through third grade teachers, all elementary school principals, and central office personnel. Funds also will be used to hire eight reading specialists who will provide

individualized technical assistance to participating school divisions and individual schools.

Ms. Poorbaugh noted that while it is anticipated that funding for the initiative will increase next year, Congress must appropriate new funds each year. No change in federal emphasis on reading is anticipated as a result of a new administration, since previous administrations also focused on reading as a priority initiative. A superintendent's memo describing the initiative will be released soon.

Virginia will use its share of the funds to conduct reading academies to be held during the summer of 2003 at the University of Virginia. The University's Curry School of Education currently manages the Department of Education's PALS assessment project (i.e., four-grade levels and Web site), at a cost of \$950,000. Academies will be available to all K-3, K-12 special education, Title I, and reading teachers, as well as to all administrators. The *Texas Effective Reading Instruction Model* will be "customized" to enable Virginia to offer the academies. Modified materials will be offered via 10 modules that focus on developing specific skills delivered in weeklong academies for kindergarten and first grade and higher teachers. The modules deal with the following: 1) phonemic awareness; 2) phonics and word study; 3) spelling and writing; 4) fluency; 5) text comprehension; 6) vocabulary; 7) grouping; 8) maximizing student learning; and 9) effective reading intervention. Schools with *Reading First* programs have been allocated grant funds and participation is mandatory. Schools that volunteer teachers to participate must provide their own funding.

To enable instructors to collaborate and to permit teachers to be "totally focused for a week on their school/grade level discussions," it is envisioned that all kindergarten teachers will attend the same academy session. A meeting will be held during the Fall of 2003 to disseminate materials generated during the summer academies. Representatives from institutions of higher education will be invited to attend. Additionally, "reading leadership" academies will be offered for principals assigned to schools with *Reading First* programs. During the summer of 2004, an academy for third-grade teachers will be held. The Department of Education will continue to offer summer academies over the six years of the grant. Subsequent academies will be customized (e.g., conducted via distance learning, etc.).

Linda Poorbaugh noted that *Reading First* programs will have an assigned coach funded by the grant to serve as a mentor. "No assessment components will be built into the academy modules, rather the role of reading coaches and specialists in schools to be purely observational". Schools with *Reading First* programs have four assessment components: 1) screening – PALS; 2) assessment (ongoing) from Department "Short List"; 3) diagnostic assessment; and 4) benchmark/outcomes tests. *Reading First* assessments do not correspond with "Adequate Yearly Progress" required under NCLB. The eight reading specialists funded by the grant will be available to assist divisions upon request. The list of schools with *Reading First* programs is not yet available since their designation is dependent on Standards of Learning test scores.

Mrs. Poorbaugh emphasized that once teachers become proficient in how to provide systematic and explicit instruction, the next step is to analyze assessments and determine what students need to learn.

Discussion and Development of ABTEL's Recommendations to the Board of Education

Dr. Jane Massey-Wilson led the board in a discussion of ABTEL's recommendations to the Board of Education regarding the "Reading Initiative to Enhance the Preparation of Pre-Service and In-Service Reading Specialists and Teachers in Elementary and Special Education" as outlined in the meeting agenda.

Mark Ingerson made a motion that the full board do the following: a) support a test in reading for elementary, special, and reading specialist educators in at least the areas of phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension; and b) make suggestions to be used by the executive committee in developing a series of recommendations to enhance reading instruction and professional development opportunities for in-service educators. The motion was seconded by Suzanne Meyer and unanimously approved by members in attendance.

ABTEL suggested the following points be included in recommendations generated by the executive committee:

- Develop licensure competencies for elementary and special education teachers and reading specialists that focus on the five major components of reading instruction;
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- In-service teachers may obtain highly qualified status by completing graduate work, earning a masters degree, or an advanced studies degree;
- Expand K-3 *Reading First* model across the board to include a self-assessment for preK-3; preK-6, including reading specialists and special education teachers;
- For middle and secondary teachers, maintain current reading competencies, ensuring that the six required credit hours of instruction include the five major areas of reading instruction;
- Reading specialists to demonstrate proficiency by taking reading specialty tests developed with a testing company such as ETS or NES, Inc.;
- Reduce the number of tests required for teachers to demonstrate proficiency in reading by having ETS conduct a study to use the SAT and ACT as alternate assessments to Praxis I (Reading Writing, and Mathematics); and,
- Require in-service reading specialists to attend *Reading First* type academies.

Liaison Reports

Department of Education

Dr. Thomas A. Elliott reviewed the top ten critical shortage teaching areas in Virginia as identified through the 2001-2002 Supply and Demand study conducted by the Department of Education. Those areas include: 1) special education, preK-12 (all areas); 2) mathematics; 3) reading specialist, (masters degree program); 4) foreign language (Spanish preK-12); 5) science (earth science, chemistry); 6) middle grades, 6-8; 7) library media, preK-12; 8) music education, preK-12; 9) technology education; and 10) English. He emphasized that of the 4,137 math teachers employed, 174 (4.2%) of the positions were held by unendorsed individuals; nine teaching positions were unfilled. Of the 1,906 science teachers employed, 164 (8.6%) of the positions were held by unendorsed individuals; eight teaching positions were unfilled. A total of 88,609 classroom teachers were employed in Virginia during 2001-2002. Of these positions, 4,136 (4.4%) were held by unendorsed individuals or were unfilled at the time of the survey.

Ms. Patty Pitts, director of professional licensure, provided highlights on the *Regulations Governing Employment of Professional Personnel* (Effective December 18, 2002). The purpose of the presentation was to reflect new changes made by the General Assembly and to address issues relative to the Board of Education. Ms. Pitts discussed issues related to “actions on teacher licensure” designed to allow school boards to consider other options, four types of contracts, phases of employment, and breach of contract. A copy of the *Regulations Governing Employment of Professional Personnel* (Effective December 18, 2002) is included in the meeting materials packet previously mailed to ABTEL members.

Dr. JoAnne Y. Carver, director of teacher education, gave a presentation highlighting *Regulations for Determining Critical Teacher Shortage Areas*. The 2001 Session of the Virginia General Assembly amended the Code of Virginia and enacted section 22.1-290.01 to include additional provisions to the Virginia Teaching Scholarship Loan Program. At its September 26, 2001, meeting the board approved the *Regulations Governing the Determination of Critical Teacher Shortage Areas* and authorized the Department of Education to continue procedures of the Administrative Process Act (APA). The proposed regulations were published in *The Virginia Register* on July 29, 2002. On September 26, 2002, the Board of Education held a public hearing to obtain further comments on the regulations. No comments were received at that time or during the public comment period that officially concluded on October 2, 2002. On November 20, 2002, the board approved the *Final Review of the Regulations Governing the Determination of Critical Teacher Shortage Areas* and authorized the Department of Education to continue the procedures of the Administrative Process Act (APA). The final APA procedures will include the following; 1) final review and publication by the Department of Budget and Planning (14 days); 2) final review by the governor's office (14 days); and 3) publication of the regulation in *The Virginia Register*. A copy of the

Regulations Governing the Determination of Critical Teacher Shortage Areas is included in the meeting materials packet previously mailed to ABTEL members.

The Virginia Community College System (VACCS)

Dr. Toni Cleveland, vice chancellor for academic services and research, will share the VACCS articulation curriculum at ABTEL's January 27, 2003, meeting.

The Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV)

Dr. Nancy Cooley, academic affairs director, announced the development of Requests for Proposals to be initiated by SCHEV later this week. Dr. Cooley emphasized the need for continuous collaboration with the Department of Education and VACCS to avoid duplication of effort in project funding. Dr. Cooley also announced the collaborative efforts recently forged between the *New York Times* and SCHEV to promote professional development activities in K-16 math and science programs in institutions of higher education and school divisions.

Other

- In response to a question regarding whether or not community college personnel could obtain Praxis scores from ETS, Dr. Elliott indicated that the 23 community colleges could have that option.
- Linda Kelly posed a question from an article she had read in *USA Today* related to efforts by the Mid-Atlantic Regional Teacher's Project (MARTP) to establish a regional teaching license. Dr. Elliott indicated that Virginia is a member of the group. He will report on MARTP at the January 27, 2003, ABTEL meeting.
- Mark Glaser asked if points for licensure renewal could be accrued through participation in ABTEL activities. Dr. Elliott indicated that these activities should be submitted for approval through established licensure renewal procedures.

Adjournment

The advisory board meeting was adjourned.